

500,000 Sikhs in the United States, I am writing to express the outrage of the Sikh community at the new video "Terrorism: A War Without Borders." While Sikhs fully support the war against terrorism, your video inaccurately depicts Sikhs as terrorists.

The video is offensive to Sikhs around the world. It significantly misrepresents the Sikh faith and the Sikh culture. The video inaccurately uses the term "Sikh terrorist" to broadly label all of the world's 25 million Sikhs—500,000 of whom live in the United States—and condemns all people of the Sikh faith. This is offensive and inaccurate.

The video's description of the June 1984 Indian military attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the most sacred of Sikh shrines, is completely bogus and entirely false. Every terrorist act cited in the video is described as either the work of an individual or a group of a certain nationality or a group with its own identity. But in the 1984 Attack on Darbar Sahib, the video refers to the terrorists as "Sikhs". It shows Sikhs, easily recognizable from their turbans and beards, with weapons in the Darbar Sahib complex along with some Indian soldiers. The fact is that there were no "terrorists" in Darbar Sahib. Sikh leaders, including Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and others, took refuge there to protect themselves from Indian government violence against Sikhs. Letters reprinted in the book Chakravayuh: Web of Indian Secularism show conclusively that India pre-planned this attack in order to kill Bhindranwale and other Sikh leaders who spoke out peacefully for Sikh sovereignty. After the attack, Indira Gandhi said, "I have broken the back of the Sikh Nation by attacking the Golden Temple." If the sanctity of the Golden Temple cannot be protected, how can the Sikh Nation survive?

Labelling all Sikhs who support an independent, sovereign Khalistan as terrorists is the propaganda line of the repressive Indian regime. I would expect better from the State Department, especially under your outstanding leadership, than to spout the clichés of Indian disinformation.

The segment on the Darbar Sahib attack states: "In an effort to establish an independent state, Sikh terrorists seized Darbar Sahib Shrine in Amritsar, India. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered a military campaign to drive out the terrorists. Hundreds were killed." In fact, over 20,000 were murdered in the attack on Darbar Sahib and 38 other Sikh Gurdwaras throughout Punjab, which was known as Operation Bluestar. The aim of this operation was to wipe out the Sikh religion.

In actuality, it is the Indian government that is the terrorist organization. The Washington Times reported on January 2, 2002 that the Indian government is sponsoring cross-border terrorism in the Pakistani province of Sindh. India stationed troops on the border in Kashmir while Pakistani troops were helping American forces look for Al Qaeda operatives, forcing Pakistan to divert troops to that border and reducing the effectiveness of their help in the search for Al Qaeda. This was a de facto pro-terrorist action. It has provided heavy water to Iran and has done business with Iraq for many years. The Indian oil minister declared Iraq "a strategic partner."

In November 1994, the Indian newspaper Hitavada reported that India paid the late Governor of Punjab, Surendra Nath, about \$1.5 billion to organize and support covert terrorist activities in Punjab and Kashmir. Two independent reports and an article in the New York Times magazine all showed that Indian forces were responsible for the massacre of 35 Sikhs in Chithisinghpura in March 2000 during President Clinton's visit. Indian forces were caught red-handed trying

to set fire to a Gurdwara and some Sikh homes in a village in Kashmir. The book Soft Target conclusively shows that India blew up its own airliner, killing 329 innocent people, to blame the Sikhs. Why is the State Department trying to appease such a state?

In all, over 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered by the Indian government since the Golden Temple attack, according to figures compiled by the Punjab State Magistracy and human rights groups and reported in The Politics of Genocide by Inderjit Singh Jaijee. According to a report by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), the Indian government admits to holding 52,268 political prisoners under the brutal, repressive "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act" (TADA), which expired in 1995. Another 50,000 have been arrested, tortured, killed in custody, declared "unidentified," and secretly cremated. The man who exposed this secret cremation policy, Jaswant Singh Khalsa, was kidnapped by the police and murdered while in police custody. His body was never handed over to his family.

India has murdered over 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, over 85,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, Tamils, and others. An Indian Cabinet minister said that everyone who lives in India must either be a Hindu or be subservient to Hinduism.

Since Christmas 1998, priests have been murdered, nuns have been raped, churches have been burned, Christian schools have been attacked. Missionary Graham Staines and his two sons, ages 8 and 10, were burned to death while sleeping in their jeep. Their killers chanted "Victory to Hanuman," a Hindu god. None of these people has been brought to justice. Missionary Joseph Cooper was deported back to Pennsylvania after Hindus attacked him so severely that he had to spend a week in the hospital. No action has been taken in these cases. Police broke up a Christian religious festival by opening fire on it. All over India, laws are being passed that ban conversion to any religion except Hinduism.

Newspaper reports show that the Indian government pre-planned the attack on Muslims in Gujarat last year in which 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims were killed, according to the Indian newspaper The Hindu. Police were ordered to stand aside and let the massacre happen, in a striking parallel to the 1984 Delhi massacre of Sikhs in which police were locked in their barracks while state-run television and radio called for more Sikh blood.

Secretary Powell, the State Department owes the Sikh Nation an apology. On behalf of the Sikh community in America and worldwide, I request an apology and correction from you for this offensive and inaccurate video. The video should be corrected or withdrawn. I thought that the United States of America was dedicated to the truth, not to spreading the disinformation of a terrorist regime.

I would like to meet with you about this at your earliest convenience. Please contact me at the above number to let me know when we can meet. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, International Sikh Organization.

TRIBUTE TO MABEL WALLIS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before this body of Congress today to pay tribute to an

outstanding citizen from my district. Mabel Wallis of Delta, Colorado has dedicated her life to serving her country and her community. She selflessly gives of her time and her talent to a grateful community. I am honored to stand before you today to recognize Mabel and her lifetime of service.

Mabel grew up in Colorado and attended Colorado University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. She worked as a student teacher before deciding to join the Navy and attend Officer Candidate School. As an Ensign, Mabel was assigned to Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, Colorado, but was chosen shortly thereafter to serve on the staff of Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, the Father of the Nuclear Navy. Mabel retired after twenty years in the Navy with the rank of Commander. Since retiring, Mabel has volunteered extensively in her community. She was active with Meals on Wheels, she volunteers for the Delta County Historical Society by typing their quarterly newsletter, and she volunteers in the Medical Records Department of the Delta County Memorial Hospital. Mabel has logged more than 700 volunteer hours with the hospital alone.

Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleagues in recognizing Mabel Wallis. Her dedication and desire to give back to her community are inspiring and serve as an example to all Americans. I am honored to share her story before this Congress today.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SKIPPACK LIONS CLUB

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Skippack Lions Club during its 50th anniversary celebration. The Skippack Lions Club was chartered in September of 1953, with the assistance of the nearby Kulpville Lions Club.

As we all know, Lions Clubs across the nation are made up of active and energetic citizens who undertake numerous initiatives and projects to make their communities better places to live and raise families. Beginning in 1917, Lions Clubs have offered people the opportunity to give something back to their communities. Since 1925, when Helen Keller addressed the Lions Club International Convention and challenged the group to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness," the Lions have been committed to providing assistance and service to the blind through a wide variety of activities. Today, with more than 46,000 clubs in 192 countries, Lions activities have expanded to help meet the needs of the global community.

The Skippack Lions Club hosts several annual events, including a community Halloween parade, an Easter egg hunt and a Veterans Day program. The Club fulfilled an important need within the Skippack area by sponsoring the Skippack Community Ambulance Association. The Lions were also instrumental in forming the Skippack Recreation Association, which continues as an active community organization, providing swimming and other recreation to Skippack area residents.

I am proud to represent an organization that has spent so many years in the service of others. I wish to extend my thanks, and the thanks of all those who have been helped by members of the Club. I encourage my colleagues to join me in saluting Skippack Lions Club on reaching this milestone.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
RUTH BARBER

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements and honoring the service of Ruth Barber.

Ruth has devoted much of her life in the service of others. Much of that time was service to the United States Postal Service. Most recently, Ruth served as the National PAC Chair with the National Association of Postmasters of the United States (NAPUS) until she retired.

Ruth grew up in New Athens, Illinois, "on the wrong side of the tracks" as she puts it. Her father was a coal miner and her mother was a housewife. Ruth married Raymond Barber on August 30, 1941 and he passed away in 1982. Ruth and Ray had two children, a son Richard who passed away in 1995 and the "joy of her life," her daughter Barbara.

Ruth worked as a drill press operator at the Bostich Wire Staple plant during World War II. While at Bostich, Ruth was responsible for drilling the barrels on Garrand rifles and inspected the 30 and 50 caliber shells at the small arms plant in St. Louis, Missouri.

Her service with the United States Postal Service began in 1967, as a clerk in the U.S. Post Office in Freeburg, Illinois. The local Postmaster at the time, Mr. Herbert Baltz, hired Ruth and she then worked in every position available at the Post Office in Freeburg. She started as a clerk, and also worked as a window clerk, Supervisor, finance office, Assistant Postmaster and the Officer in Charge (OIC). She was appointed the U.S. Postmaster of Freeburg in October 1979.

Her involvement with NAPUS started in 1975, when she was a Supervisor. Her active involvement in NAPUS activities allowed her to be appointed as the State Chair in 1990. Ruth has attended every state convention of NAPUS since 1982 and has attended all the national conventions as well. Ruth also has attended every Leadership Conference in Washington, DC since 1982. She retired from the active service with the United States Post Office on August 30, 1990 but remained active in the community having served with the Freeburg Chamber of Commerce.

Ruth works tirelessly in the service of the USPS and NAPUS. I have visited with Ruth on more than one occasion where she has strongly advocated the issues and concerns of the working men and women of the United States Postal Service. She has a genuine, personal interest in helping to improve the working conditions at the Postal Service. Ruth performs all of her duties with a tremendous gusto and enthusiasm, unique to her. I am proud to honor the service of Ruth Barber and wish her all the best in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service and the achievements of Ruth Barber and wish her and her family all the best.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE MUELLER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before this body of Congress today to honor an outstanding citizen and a community hero. Stephanie Mueller of Pagosa Springs, Colorado showed quick thinking and level-headedness in the face of personal danger and helped to prevent a catastrophic forest fire. I am honored to share her story here today.

Stephanie was traveling in Archuleta county when she noticed a fire in the trees. Unable to contact local authorities immediately, Stephanie took her shovel and began digging a fire line around the burn area. As others arrived at the site, Stephanie was able to use the skills she learned as part of a Forest Service hand crew to instruct onlookers as to what they could do to help her keep the fire contained until Archuleta Country firefighters arrived and extinguished the blaze.

This is the second time Stephanie has saved her community from a devastating fire. Three years ago Stephanie encountered another fire while driving in the Coyote Park area, which she helped to extinguish. For her efforts in that fire, Stephanie received the much-deserved Angel of the Highway award.

Mr. Speaker, Stephanie Mueller's courage is an inspiration to us all. As ashes fell on her head and shoulders, Stephanie sacrificed her own personal safety for the good of her community. I join with my colleagues and a grateful community in extending my thanks and appreciation to Stephanie Mueller.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EMPLOYEE BENEFIT RESEARCH INSTITUTE (EBRI)

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) on its 25th Anniversary. Over the last quarter century, Congress has been expertly informed by the Institute's bipartisan and balanced analysis of retirement and health benefits issues. I, therefore, ask my colleagues to join me in saluting this important milestone for EBRI.

Efforts to privatize Social Security, the ongoing corporate governance and pension scandals, and the need to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare make the work of EBRI now more important than ever. Members have come to trust the Institute's data and analysis of these complex issues and today we recognize their contributions to the ongoing debates in these areas.

In addition, I appreciate the fact that they are not advocates. Instead, the Institute simply provides the unvarnished data and let the

numbers speak for themselves. Their work has helped me to more thoroughly evaluate policy options. I would like to thank them for the assistance they've provided over the years.

Mr. Speaker, as the Employee Benefit Research Institute celebrates its 25th Anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to its significant accomplishments and dedication to public service. I'm sure they will continue to serve Congress and our nation for decades to come.

THE PENSION FUNDING EQUITY
ACT OF 2003

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join BILL THOMAS, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, JOHN BOEHNER, Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and GEORGE MILLER, Ranking Democrat on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, to introduce the "Pension Funding Equity Act of 2003." This bill responds to the most pressing pension issue of the day that affects the retirement benefits of 44 million American workers, their families, and beneficiaries. I am pleased that bipartisan cooperation has allowed this process to move forward and enabled us to take action on this important issue.

The lack of retirement security for millions of workers is an issue that demands our immediate attention. More than 50 percent of American workers who work full-time and play by all the rules of corporate America have no retirement benefits. I will not rest until this Congressional body takes the necessary steps to correct this disparity.

The issue addressed in this bill is of great importance as well. The fortunate few workers who do have a pension benefit under our defined benefit system are depending on us to protect those benefits. This bill would accomplish this goal for the next two years by providing plan sponsors the certainty they need in determining the amount that must be contributed to the plan. However, a permanent solution to this issue must be found.

The long-term viability of the defined benefit plan system is crucial for the secured retirement of millions of American workers. Designing a plan to maintain this viability will be a challenge we must undertake over the next two years. Any permanent solution must balance the competing elements of this issue, including (1) providing financial relief to employers who maintain defined benefit plans, (2) protecting the financial security of the pension benefits promised to workers under these plans, and (3) protecting the financial strength of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, the agency that insures benefits under these plans. I remain hopeful that we can work together to accomplish these goals.

I have long supported the idea of advancing legislation on this issue in a free and unfettered manner. This issue should not be held hostage to additional pension reforms that have little or no chance of being enacted this year. I am pleased to co-sponsor this legislation, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to develop a long-term solution to this issue.